

Multimedia Production Program at Eastside Technical Center

Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers bring something special to the classroom in that many if not most are trained first in their areas of expertise, then as a teacher. That combination gives students a better perspective on what a career in a chosen field may be like by relating to the experiences those CTE teachers bring into the classroom.

Michelle Rauch spent 17 years in the field of broadcast journalism before bringing her talents to the Multimedia Production program at Eastside Technical Center in Fayette County.



In just her second year at the school, Rauch's students have already compiled an impressive list of awards and community project recognitions including a first place honor at the recent Student Technology Leadership Program (STLP) State Championship.

In looking over the categories available for the STLP competition, Rauch said her students decided to do a video promoting tourism. The Kentucky Department of Tourism sponsors that particular competition.

The theme, "There's only one Kentucky" inspired the students to come together and create their own version and out of approximately 80 entries, the Eastside program came out on top.

"The students have done a lot of videotaping in the classroom but this was the first time they had really used the green screen for production purposes and they really had fun doing it," she said.

It is that hands-on "fun stuff" that has taught her students to be more tech-savvy and provided them an avenue to learn more about video and audio production. And through STLP, Rauch said it has played a big role in getting and keeping her students excited about what they are doing.

"I think we are going to do more and more with STLP each year because it's just a really cool event and the students who went this year, for the first time were excited by seeing all the things there and saying they couldn't wait till next year to participate in more events," she added. "I think our involvement in the program is just going to grow and grow."

Rauch has started a "wall of winners" in her classroom to display plaques and awards won by her students. In addition to the STLP award, a group from her class was recently recognized by Lexington Mayor Jim Gray for their creation of an underage drinking public service announcement used in the "Keep it Real" campaign. The group won four awards connected with the program. The initiative is supported by the Fayette County Mayor's Alliance for Substance Abuse and Fayette County Agency for Substance Abuse Policy.

While Multimedia programs are not plentiful throughout the state's CTE sector, Rauch said she feels it is a program that is growing and has much potential for the future.

"I don't think you see this program as much as the more traditional tech programs but we live in such a multimedia society, I think and hope this will continue to grow," she said.

Rauch's desk is surrounded by pictures from her days in TV which usually generates many questions from her students but her love for journalism and the media began early in life.

"I started out as a student journalist in middle school and in a way what I was doing then is what my students are doing now, as technology has evolved. They are multimedia journalists," she said.

Rauch's interest in journalism carried over into college which led her to a major in broadcast journalism and a long career in television news, most recently at WTVQ in Lexington where she worked for 12 years.

She said she began as a one man band on TV doing her own video and editing as well as reporting and that is what her students are doing now, learning all the different aspects of video production. "The best way to learn is to do it all," she said.

In that vein, the Multimedia program has fit well into the CTE model as it is a very hands-on kind of learning, noted Rauch. "As far as being a teacher, I look at it as just sharing what I know and love," she said.

The proof is in her students as many of them have a definite plan for their futures and expect to use what they have learned in her class.

Genoveva Segura, a junior in the class said she wanted to be in the program because she hopes to go to college and major in journalism.

"I love to write and I have a friend who owes a small Spanish newspaper I write for sometimes," she said. "Everybody (in the class) has gotten to know each other and we help each other and it's really fun." Obond Brown is a first year junior student in the class. He said he likes creating videos and being in front of the camera and this program has helped him learn more about that.



"One thing that has surprise me about this class is I didn't think I would catch on as fast as I did," he said. Now, when I watch something on television I'm more into talking about how the scene was set and what they should have or could have done to make it better. I think this class will help me in the future because I want to go into radio broadcasting."

Greg Lee, another first year junior said he heard about the class from a friend and enjoys learning all the different aspects of creating a video.

"I like the fact that I get to edit, direct and produce anything I want," he said. "I always wanted to do this. I have so far created a Public Service Announcement about recycling, some hard news stories and created some original music. Since I've been here I've actually learned how to produce something and know now what goes on behind the scenes. I have a director's eye!"

Travon Alexander is a second year senior in the program. He said what he thought would be hard to master coming in proved to be much easier once he began to experience all the different things to do in the class.

"I found that learning can be fun and I carried that from here to my home school," he said. "I have learned to make music, set the lights, I anchor from time to time and I work the camera. We can make original music for our projects or our newscasts and not have to ask to use copyrighted material."

Rauch pointed out that having fun while learning helps students educationally and the program can



provide students with many different career paths besides just being able to make a cool video.

"You can be in TV news or commercial production but more and more companies are looking for employees with these skills," she said. "You could work for local government or even a real estate agent. Any company that wants their information out there, these students have the skills."

Rauch also said for those not wishing to be in front of the camera, there are many technical aspects that go into any video production including producing and directing, something in which her students are getting experience, as well.

Lainey Geddes, a first year student said she signed up for the class thinking she might not catch on quickly but it has been fun and she has learned to work as a group.

"I created my first video called "My Obsession" which for me was about chewing gun, then we did a hard news video; mine was about smoking at school," she said. "I love this class and I'm planning on

coming back next year. I have learned to set up the camera and make sure the shot is composed correctly; I love getting unique shots with different angles.”

Cibrian Mack, a first year senior student said he wanted to take the class because he loves filming and capturing certain moments.

“I use to make videos with my brother before he went to college and I want to major in broadcasting,” he said. “My school counselor brought me and another group of students here on a tech visit and I knew this was for me.”

Christian Cox has served as the resident director for the last two years in the program. He said being a musician, the audio portion of the class lured him in but it took some time to get understand much of the technology.

“We got here and all figured out we didn’t know what we were doing but another student helped get us on the right path and with some ‘on the job training’ we got things on the right track,” he said. “This class has given me a lot of freedom and creative expression you don’t get in other schools.”

Rauch said the collaborative efforts made in this program will carry over once they have left for college or the world of work and by allowing some creation expression, her students are gaining a sense of what they may want to do later in life.